

31 1 registration of the softgood on the computer enabling the softgood to be played by the player program
2 beyond the limited extent of the preview, the program player thereafter allowing a purchaser who has
3 thus purchased the softgood to fully access the softgood.

4 20. (Amended) A method for controlling play of a softgood on a computer using a player
5 program, said player program also being employed to purchase the softgood through a network
6 transaction, comprising the steps of:

7 (a) enabling a user to preview the softgood on the computer within the player
8 program; and

9 (b) enabling the user to purchase the softgood through a transaction conducted
10 from within the player program, such that after the user has purchased the softgood, the softgood is
11 registered on the computer using a registration value provided during the transaction, said registration
12 value identifying a software program used to create the softgood, registration of the softgood on the
13 computer providing access to the softgood in accord with a license to the softgood so that it is
14 thereafter playable on the computer with the player program beyond a preview limit.

15 22. (Amended) The method of Claim 20, wherein if the softgood is transferred to a different
16 computer after being purchased, the softgood must again be registered on the different computer to
17 enable the softgood to be played beyond the preview limit on the different computer.

18 23. (Amended) The method of Claim 20, wherein the registration value includes at least one
19 of:

- 20 (a) a unique identifier for the softgood;
21 (b) a unique identifier for the player program;
22 (c) an identifier for a creator of the softgood; and
23 (d) a name of the purchaser of the softgood.

24 24. (Amended) The method of Claim 20, wherein the step of enabling the user to purchase
25 the softgood through a transaction conducted from within the player program comprises the steps of:

26 (a) confirming that a financial account number provided by a purchaser is valid
27 and is approved for purchase of the softgood by checking the financial account number with an
28 approval service during the transaction; and if the financial account number is valid and approved,

29 (b) transmitting the registration value to the purchaser; and if not,

30 (c) advising the purchaser that purchase of the softgood was disapproved.

31 25. (Amended) The method of Claim 20, further comprising the step of maintaining a
32 database on an e-commerce server in which an identification of each purchaser and a list of each
33 softgood purchased by each purchaser are included, to facilitate distribution of at least a portion of
34 the purchase price of the softgood to a creator of the softgood, and to store the registration value so
35 that the purchaser can again reregister the softgood on a computer if the registration of the softgood
on the computer is lost.

32. (Amended) A system for facilitating purchase of a softgood of which copies are freely distributed to prospective purchasers for preview prior to purchase, said softgood having a unique identifier that is included within the softgood before its distribution, comprising:

(a) a purchaser computer that includes a first processor, a first memory in which a plurality of machine instructions are stored that implement a plurality of functions when executed by the processor, a first network interface coupling the computer in communication with a network, at least one user interface for input of data to the memory, and a display on which graphics and text are displayed;

(b) a remote computer that includes a second processor, a second memory in which are stored a plurality of machine instructions that implement a plurality of functions when executed by the second processor, and in which a database containing data relating to purchases of softgoods are stored, a second network interface coupling the remote computer in communication with the network and thereby selectively coupling the remote computer in data communication with the purchaser computer via the network;

(c) a softgood comprising machine instructions or media data that are loaded into the first memory of the purchaser computer, the softgood not including any copy protection that prohibits the softgood from being freely copied and freely distributed, other of the machine instructions stored in the first memory comprising a player program that uses the softgood, said player program carrying out a plurality of the functions when the machine instructions of the player program are executed by the first processor, including:

(i) enabling the softgood to be previewed to a limited extent prior to the user purchasing the softgood;

(ii) enabling the user to purchase the softgood in a transaction with the remote computer that is conducted over the network;

(iii) registering the softgood on the purchaser computer after the softgood has been purchased, said softgood being thus registered using a registration value provided by the remote computer; and

(iv) checking for a registration of the softgood on the purchaser computer and enabling the softgood to be used by the player program beyond the limited extent of the preview only if the softgood is determined to be registered on the purchaser computer; and

(d) wherein said plurality of functions implemented by said second processor in the remote computer include:

(i) responding to a request to purchase the softgood received over the network from the purchaser computer;

(ii) confirming an approval of a credit purchase by the user of the purchaser computer with a credit approval agency that is coupled to the network;

1 ^{a°} (iii) determining the registration value as a function of at least the unique
2 identifier of the softgood and sending the registration value to the remote computer over the network
3 to register the softgood on the purchaser's computer; and

4 (iv) allocating a portion of a purchase price of the softgood set by terms of a
5 prior agreement to a creator of the softgood.

6 ^{37 a°} 35. (Twice Amended) A system for facilitating automated sale of softgoods from which a revenue
7 stream is returned to each creator of the softgoods, each softgood including a unique identifier, comprising:

8 (a) creator computers that execute at least one software program used by creators
9 of the softgoods to produce the softgoods and to assign the unique identifier to the softgoods
10 produced thereby, said creator computers including network interfaces that couple the creator
11 computers to a publicly accessible network, the creators of the softgoods entering into agreements
12 with an e-commerce agency in which the e-commerce agency agrees to facilitate the automated sale
13 of the softgoods and to return a portion of the revenue stream from the automated sale to the creators
14 of the softgoods; and

15 (b) a server computer operated by the e-commerce agency, said server computer
16 maintaining a database in which data relating to the softgoods are stored, said data including unique
17 identifiers for the softgoods, said server computer also including a network interface coupling the server
18 computer in communication with the publicly accessible network and receiving the unique identifier
19 for each softgood from one of:

20 ^{BS} (i) the creator computers before distribution of the softgood to prospective
21 purchasers; and

22 (ii) a user of the softgood at a sale of the softgood, a purchase of a softgood being
23 initiated when a softgood is being used, said purchase by a user of the softgood causing the server
24 computer to confirm approval of a credit transaction for the user by an on-line communication with a
25 credit approval agency, and if the credit transaction is approved, to transmit a registration value over
26 the publicly accessible network to a computer of the user to register the softgood on the computer of
27 the user, to enter data related to the purchase within the database, whereas without the registration
28 value, a user is allowed only limited access to the softgood.

28 Please add new claims 45-47 as follows:

29 ^{37 a°} --45. A method for facilitating automated sale of softgoods, comprising the steps of:

30 (a) providing to a creator of the softgoods a composer program that automatically
31 includes a unique identifier in each softgood before the softgood is distributed to prospective
32 purchasers, said unique identifier specifically referencing the creator of the softgoods, such that
33 softgoods created using the composer program:

34 (i) require a specific player program to be accessed; and
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1 (ii) do not include any copy protection that prohibits the softgood from
2 being freely copied and freely distributed;

3 (b) providing an agency that implements softgood purchase transactions and
4 maintains a database in which data relating to the sale of softgoods are stored, unique identifiers of
5 the softgoods being referenced in the database to track the softgood purchase transactions, such that
6 whenever a softgood is purchased, the agency provides a registration value corresponding to the unique
7 identifier for the softgood purchased to a computing system used to purchase the softgood;

8 (c) providing the specific player program to prospective purchasers, such that each
9 time the specific player program is used to play a softgood created using the composer program, the
10 specific player program automatically:

11 (i) checks the computing system on which the specific player program is
12 executing, to determine if a registration value corresponding to the unique identifier for the softgood has
13 been provided to said computing system, and if so, plays the softgood, providing access to its full range of
14 benefits; but

15 (ii) if the registration value has not been provided to the computing system,
16 only enabling playing of the softgood in a preview mode, and prompting a user to purchase the
17 softgood in a transaction with the agency; and

18 (d) distributing the softgoods to prospective purchasers, such distribution not
19 being limited to distribution over a private network.

20 46. The method of Claim 42, wherein if the registration value has not been provided to the
21 computing system, the specific player program automatically communicates with the agency to
22 determine if the unique identifier for the softgood is associated with a purchase of the softgood made
23 by a purchaser who is an authorized user of the computing system on which the specific player
24 program is resident, and if so, plays the softgood with its full range of benefits.

25 47. A system for facilitating purchase of a softgood of which copies are freely distributed
26 to prospective purchasers for preview prior to purchase, said softgood having a unique identifier that
27 is included within the softgood before its distribution, comprising:

28 (a) a purchaser computer that includes a first processor coupled to a first memory
29 in which a plurality of machine instructions are stored that implement a plurality of functions when
30 executed by the first processor, a first network interface coupling the purchaser computer in
31 communication with a network, at least one user interface for input of data to the first memory, and a
32 display on which graphics and text are displayed;

33 (b) a remote computer that includes a second processor coupled to a second
34 memory in which are stored a plurality of machine instructions that implement a plurality of
35 functions when executed by the second processor, and in which a database containing data relating to

1 purchases of softgoods are stored, a second network interface coupling the remote computer in
2 communication with the network and thereby selectively coupling the remote computer in data
3 communication with the purchaser computer via the network;

4 (c) the softgood comprising machine instructions or media data that are loaded
5 into the first memory of the purchaser computer and not including any copy protection that prohibits
6 the softgood from being freely copied and freely distributed, wherein other of the machine
7 instructions stored in the first memory comprise a player program that uses the softgood, said player
8 program causing the first processor to carry out a plurality of the functions when the machine
9 instructions of the player program are executed by the first processor, including:

10 (i) determining if a registration value corresponding to the unique
11 identifier of the softgood that is to be played has been provided to the purchaser computer, and if so,
12 playing the softgood so as to provide access to its full range of benefits;

13 (ii) if a registration value corresponding to the unique identifier of the
14 softgood that is to be played has not been provided to the purchaser computer, communicating with
15 the database on the remote computer over the network to determine if an authorized user of the
16 purchaser computer has previously purchased the softgood that is to be played, and if so, playing the
17 softgood so as to provide access to its full range of benefits; and

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18 (iii) if a registration value corresponding to the unique identifier of a
19 softgood that is to be played has not been provided to purchaser computer on which the player
20 program is resident, and if no authorized user of the purchaser computer has previously purchased the
21 softgood that is to be played, playing the softgood so as to provide a limited access, to enable a preview
22 of the softgood, and enabling a user of the purchaser computer to purchase the softgood in a
23 transaction with the remote computer that is conducted over the network, such that when a softgood
24 is purchased, a registration value corresponding to the unique identifier of a softgood is received with
25 the softgood; and

26 (d) wherein said plurality of functions implemented by said second processor in
27 the remote computer include:

28 (i) responding to a request to purchase the softgood received over the
29 network from the purchaser computer;

30 (ii) confirming an approval of a credit purchase by the user of the
31 purchaser computer with a credit approval agency that is coupled to the network;

32 (iii) determining the registration value as a function of at least the unique
33 identifier of the softgood;

34 (iv) sending the registration value to the remote computer over the network
35 to register the softgood on the purchaser's computer; and